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For the Evening Fire-side.

THE PHILANTHROPIST: NO. XXVII.

" —— He who filches from me my good name,
" Robs me of that which not enriches him,
" But makes me poor indeed.——"

SHAKESPEARE.

On viewing the ſituation of every individual of ſociety in relation to the whole, a conviction is naturally attendant, that the ſpirit of charity and forbearance has the greateſt tendency to preſerve the union of the different members of the human family, and is abſolutely eſſential to our individual as well as collective proſperity; conſequently that every thing which is oppoſed to a diſpoſition of univerſal benevolence, ſhould be ſhunned as inimical to the welfare of all civilized ſociety.

Among the various deviations from this diſpoſition, the *Philanthropiſt* wiſhes to draw the attention of his readers to one, which, though it has often been aſſailed by the united efforts of the ſatyriſt, the moraliſt, and the divine, is ſtill too generally practiſed to admit of any apology for another attempt at a reformation, in which its ableſt advocates have been unſucceſsful. In the nature of its exciting cauſes and its effects, it is amply obnoxious to the *cenſure*, and in its prevalence forbids the *ſilence* of every *Phlanthropiſt*.

The reader has no doubt anticipated the object of reproof, which is, *the gratification of an ignoble propenſity to detraction*.

It is a ſpecies of mental and moral depravity, which I do not heſitate to aſſert, is a palpable deviation from the principles of good ſenſe, juſtice and goodneſs of heart. To demonſtrate this, it will be neceſſary to examine the nature of its effects, which will be of material importance in aſcertaining its impulſes; and after coming to a correct idea of theſe, I apprehend the above propoſitions will be evident.

Firſt, then, of its effects.

From giving publicity to the foibles or vices of our neighbour, very little, if any benefit can poſſibly accrue. It can have no tendency to remove the cauſes of our cenſure, nor to produce a reformation in the party defamed; for by that puſillanimity which is the concomitant of adiſpoſition to calumniate, a candid admonition to the perſon who is obnoxious, will be entirely precluded.

Perhaps it may be contended, that the apprehenſion of public notoriety is a conſiderable check upon vicious inclinations, and of courſe may be conſidered as an incentive to virtue; but the futility of this argument is eaſily demonſtrable, for experience, the ſureſt of inſtructors, teaches us, that when the mind is radically diſpoſed to vice, this fear of expoſure has only a ſmall and partial effect, being in moſt caſes counteracted by a contrary hope and expectation. But be its influence what it may in preventing an *active* declenſion from virtue, ſtill the propenſity to vice is not corrected, and the mind muſt remain in a ſtate of *paſſive* depravity until the power of conviction ſhall have produced a *radical* reformation.

Thus we ſee that very trifling indeed is the influence of this fear of expoſure, and that the moſt material effect of detraction, is that of being injurious to ſome one's good name. And it is a ſentiment which has univerſally obtained, that no temporal bleſſing can compenſate for the loſs of reputation.

Hence it is a deviation from the dictates of good ſenſe—for theſe cannot induce a meaſure, from which the benefit reſulting is more than counterpoiſed by the evil.

When we are not perſonally acquainted with the validity of an aſperſion, but have merely heard it through a ſecondary or more remote channel, we ſhould always have reference to the adage, that " To every tale there is a fair and a dark ſide."—The perſons through whom it has been communicated to us, may have been influenced by ſuch ideas on the occaſion, as in relating it, to have given it an aſpect, of which an entire knowledge of the attendant circumſtances would not admit. Even where we are the immediate obſervers of a perſon's actions, it often happens, that for want of the inclination, or perhaps the power, completely to aſcertain his motives, we conceive an opinion entirely erroneous. Of courſe, actions which have originated in the moſt correct views, may be, and often have been, miſrepreſented in ſuch a manner as to incur cenſure and diſgrace. Thus it may be conſidered as in ſome meaſure a diſcouragement to the practice of virtue, by ſubjecting all our actions to the caprice of an uncandid conſtruction. Perſons who merit both the applauſe of the world, and our individual veneration and eſteem, are by theſe means rendered the objects of our ſcorn and execration; and their *reputation*, which as before obſerved, is the moſt ſacred and ineſtimable of all earthly goods, is ſacrilegiouſly immolated at the ſhrine of this deteſtable vice. So that to *repeat* a tale of ſlander is an abſolute violation of the " eternal principles of juſtice."

From this view of the ſubject, which I hold to be a correct one, we muſt inevitably infer, that it is alſo a deviation from goodneſs of heart.

Our three firſt propoſitions being thus eſtabliſhed, we will now endeavour to aſcertain the exciting cauſes, which, though various, I conceive may be generally compriſed, in envy, malice, cowardly revenge, and weakneſs and vacancy of mind.

There are implanted in the human mind, principles of ambition and emulation, which, when connected with thoſe of philanthropic candor and generoſity, are among the moſt powerful incentives to virtuous actions. But when they are debaſed by being made excluſively ſubſervient to ſelfiſh views, they recede from their primitive deſign, and become the agents of vice. In the latter caſe envy and jealouſy are their concomitants. We endeavour to enhance our

own *comparative* merit, not by a real elevation of our own character, but by the depreſſion of that of others. With this view the conduct of thoſe who are in any ſenſe our competitors, is canvaſſed with the moſt malicious ſcrutiny; and we endeavour to exhibit every action as proceeding from ſome unworthy motive; even thoſe which ſhould inſpire our admiration, we ſtrive to transform into ſubjects of ridicule and cenſure. Thus, if a man be brave, he muſt be haughty and ambitious; if he give a charity—we aſcribe it to oſtentation; if he be an economiſt, he is charged with meanneſs and avarice, &c. &c.

Thus are envy and its general attendant, malice, material impulſes to detraction.—But before we leave this ſection of the ſubject, the idea ſuggeſts itſelf that it may in ſome caſes proceed from malice *alone*.—Where we obſerve in an individual any deviation from correct conduct, which does not immediately affect ourſelves, the only emotion we feel is that of indignation, which generally reſults from malice; and our zeal for the cauſe of virtue in ſuch caſes, ſometimes takes a wrong courſe.—Inſtead of candidly repreſenting his error, to the individual himſelf, we fly to the prepoſterous reſource of giving a ſerious lecture on the ſubject of others. How far I am correct in theſe ideas I leave to the reader.

Minds which are diveſted of the noble ſpirit of magnanimity, are often indebted to this clandeſtine mode of revenge. Like "the ſerpent in the graſs," they ſpit forth their venom, confident of impunity. Being too mean and puſillanimous to purſue open and honourable meaſures, their moſt efficient reſource is in the pitiful effort to detract from the good character of their adverſary; and in order to ſcreen their depravity from detection, they aſſume the hypocritical maſk of friendſhip and good will.

Hence, how forcible, how correct the aſſertion, that "ſlander is the revenge of a coward, and diſſimulation his defence."

There are ſome perſons, who are *diſeaſed* with ſuch an ungovernable loquacity, and ſuch a paſſion for the relation of every thing which has the appearance of novelty, that they are led, I had almoſt ſaid *mechanically*, to tell every little incident that occurs---and to tattling about what this or the other one, may have ſaid or done.*

Perſons of this denomination are objects rather of our pity than of our cenſure, though they richly merit both. They find it the moſt difficult taſk in the world to reſtrain their natural volubility, and the ſterility of their minds not affording ſufficient matter for animadverſion, they are neceſſarily obliged to have recourſe to tattling and ſcandal—in which the moſt barren genius, was never diſappointed in the expectation of a ſupply—and the frequency of this recourſe is ſoon matured into a habit from which they are ſeldom conſtrained to deviate. Though it cannot be ſaid in this caſe to proceed from any *very* vicious motives, yet it is an evidence of great weakneſs and vacancy of mind.

After thus much on the nature of the impulſes and effects of detraction, I ſhall conclude with a few general obſervations:

"Do unto others, as you would that they, in ſimilar circumſtances ſhould do unto you," is a recommendation predicated upon the genuine ſpirit of "Peace and good will to men." An adherence to this, ſo juſtly termed the *Golden rule*, would lead us to view the actions of others with an eye of equitable candour; and to impute to them no views but ſuch as are juſtly deducible from their conduct. Where the tenour of their motives is uncertain, we would be diſpoſed in our deciſſion "to err in mercy rather than in judgment." And where the conduct of an individual is palpably cenſurable, inſtead of publiſhing it to the world, we would let *him* be the firſt to whom we ſhould communicate our diſapprobation. It is true, that where there is cauſe to ſuppoſe that any one perſon is likely to be injured by the bad intentions of another, juſtice would require that the depravity of the latter ſhould be made known to the party endangered; but I am doubtful whether ſuch a circumſtance can be conſidered relevant.

It is however ſafeſt to conform to this general rule. "*If you have any thing good to ſay of a perſon, ſay it to others—but if any thing bad, ſay it to himſelf alone.*

I come now very reluctantly to notice, that a propenſity to ſcandal is a characteriſtic almoſt peculiar to the ſex, which was deſigned both in perſon and moral lovelineſs to be the ornament, the maſter-piece of creation!!

I am what ſome would call an extravagant admirer of the ſex; and the idea of being inſtrumental in correcting the foible, is the only ſpoil which leads me to the attack.

However irreſiſtibly the eclat of perſonal beauty, or intellectual endowments, may command our admiration, the moment we diſcover this canker in the heart, it checks our eſteem, and tarniſhes the luſtre of the moſt brilliant accompliſhments. Is it not then "a ſubject worthy of eternal regret,"* that the *Chef-d'œuvre* of nature ſhould be marred by ſo diſguſting a blemiſh. But this is one, added to the numerous demonſtrations of the non-perfectibility of all human excellence.

ROMEO.

* There is a *certain diſeaſe*, to which (ſay our Phyſicians) every other will yield. But really, I am almoſt diſpoſed to charge them with an error in the one to which they have attached this prerogative—for I am very apprehenſive the above mentioned diſeaſe of loquacity will capitulate to no other than a ſpecies of the *tetanus*, termed the *Triſmus* or *Locked-jaw*. I will however retract this inſinuation againſt the correctneſs of the learned faculty---as perhaps in the above quoted aſſertion, the indiſpoſition of the mind is not included.

For the Evening Fire-side.

Correſpondence between Eſculapius and Amanda.

[*Concluded from our laſt*]

TO ESCULAPIUS.

Why ſo ſanguine, good Doctor, I pray?
Why flatter yourſelf and your friend,
That ſhould he his canvaſs display,
Success would his voyage attend?

'Tis a difficult ſcience, he'll find,
To engage in affairs of the heart,
And to yield me contentment of mind,
Conſists not in Medical art.

The eaſe which I ſo much admire,
No med'cine can ever beſtow;
But the recipe I ſhall require,
I'll briefly endeavour to ſhew;

Not a diet of gruel and ſalt,
To impov'riſh both body and mind,
But treatment that's kind to a fault,
With reſpect and timidity join'd;

A character guiltleſs and bright,
By weakneſs or folly unſtain'd;
Generoſity's heaven-taught flight
By Oeconomy's caution reſtrain'd;

The ſoftneſs, the ſpirit of youth;
The cool recollection of age;
An adherence to virtue and truth,
And the ſacred hiſtorical page;

Strong ſenſe and a juſtneſs of thought,
That ſhould all my wild fancies improve;
Ambition with fortitude fraught,
And dignity ſoften'd by love;

* St. Pierre.

A spirit no menace can bend,
  Tho' mildness the point may secure;
A tear for the woes of a friend,
  And a purse for the wants of the poor.

The physician, whoever he be,
  That can mix these ingredients with art,
And present the blest compound to me,
  Is worthy my hand and my heart.

But, pray, what assurance have I,
  That your friend in the East can do this?
Yet you take it for granted, and cry,
  Come, Damon, inherit the bliss!

It is but conjecture, at best,
  That he's not an ignorant elf,
Who may prove, if he's brought to the test,
  As arrant a quack as yourself.

For the Evening Fire-side.

REVELATION SUPERIOR TO REASON.

"In our passage through the boundless ocean of Disquisition we often take fogs for land, and after having long toiled to approach them, find, instead of repose and harbours, new storms of objection, and fluctuations of uncertainty."

JOHNSON.*

The human mind, cultivated and refined by education, and improved by its commerce with life, ever aiming at excellence, is a sight worthy of the notice of superior beings. But as every good that we here enjoy, is tinctured, in wisdom, with some evil, so are the energies of this active power frequently ill directed. Its desire to *know*, leads it into error and absurdity; and those faculties which might, by a proper tendency, become useful to man, are, alas! too often rendered instruments of unhappiness and folly.

Perhaps in no case is this truth evinced so fully, as when the mind pursues objects beyond its reach by "considering too curiously;"† and attempts, by its limited powers of reason, to unravel the mystic recesses of revelation. As an illustration of my position, I shall adduce some instances, in which this censurable spirit of arrogant inquiry will appear in its true point of view.

Various are the deep and intricate paths of Providence, which many, in the presumption of folly, have endeavoured, by the glimmering and imperfect light of *reason*, to elucidate. Among these, none have excited more *vain* inquiry and speculation, than the manner in which we shall arise, and the form which we shall assume, at the LAST GREAT DAY. Respecting the latter of these points, two opposite principal opinions have been prevalent in different bosoms. One, that the same body which now envelops the soul, in whatsoever manner its various component particles may have transmigrated through different forms of matter, shall then be *re-united* to the spirit, and rise *purified*, a "building of God!" And this is, in an obscure manner, confirmed, among other passages of the sacred writings, by the following:—"And though, after my skin, worms destroy *this body*, yet in my FLESH shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and *mine* eyes shall behold, and not another."‡

The other opinion is, that a *new* body, of a more etherial nature than the present one, shall clothe the immortal soul through the ages of eternity.

As each of these is equally easy to be performed by Him who holds all power in His hands, the latter seems more consistent with Eternal Goodness. Objections may be made, however, by sophistical reasoners, to this supposed state: that as a new body will be given to the soul, *identity* will be confounded; nor will it be accountable for deeds *done in another body*. The fallacy of this, is evident.

Persons, attached to peculiar opinions, will adhere to any particular text of Scripture, which may be coincident with their ideas, and it is easily perverted to their meaning: thus 2 Cor. Chap. 5. v. 1. 2. 3. 4, as well as innumerable other dark passages in the sacred writings, may be modified *any way*. Hence, some are of opinion, that the *body* will be clothed, *immediately after death*, with a more etherial nature or essence, to fit it for continuing still the residence of the soul, until the morn of universal resurrection. The Platonic Doctrine asserted, that the soul could not subsist or act, *of itself*, without the intervention or mediation of a body or receptacle; and agreeably with this, others have thought, that there must be an *intermediate* state between Death and Resurrection; and that the soul either lies torpid, or the body is immediately changed into a proper vehicle for it

Many of these opinions, even to the eye of finite human reason, appear absurd.

Yet plausible or accurate as these speculations may be thought, it is evident to a truly enlightened mind, that whatsoever the real state of the soul after the dissolution of the body shall be—*these things* concern us not; and an inquiry into them, which cannot be resolved by reason, as revelation only can disclose the *data*, will merely serve, without any benefit resulting to us, to draw the mind from the "one thing needful."

It appears to me also, that our trust in Divine Providence is frequently destroyed by our vain desires to be acquainted with those events which will mark our future lives in this world. They evince that we are not satisfied with our present condition, and that we constantly anticipate its alteration. Altered we know it will be, in this variable stage of existence; but whether for the better or not *in respect to ourselves*, we surely ought to rest in the disposition of Him, who governs the universe by infinite wisdom: and who will order all things for the general good, although it may please Him to dispense particular evil.†

"Enough has Heav'n indulg'd of bliss below,
  To tempt our tarriance in this lov'd retreat;
Enough has Heav'n ordain'd of useful woe,
  To make us languish for a happier seat!"‡

Why then do we depend on future expectations in this transitory state? why so fondly anticipate pleasure, or fearfully predict evil? The future is generally deceptive; it seldom brings that which was desired with ardour, and when the expected time does arrive, the capability of enjoyment is entirely lost. Let us therefore gratefully accept the favours of the present moment, for these only are within our reach. Enough is known to direct us to happiness. It is declared by the sacred writings—the unerring standard of purity and truth, that "Secret things belong to God only, but things which are revealed, to us, and to our children."‖

Attempt not, then, vain man! who dependest on the bounties of an hour, nay! of a *moment*, by the limited powers of reason, to lift with unhallowed presumption that curtain, which is impenetrable to the short-sighted vision of frail humanity! Stay thy daring steps; and rest satisfied with the uncertainty, in which future events are enveloped: and remember, that as Revelation only can illuminate the dark recesses of futurity, they are "secret things;" and consequently not placed within the narrow sphere of our capacity, but "belong only unto God!" Therefore, it is not

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* Review of an Inquiry into the nature of evil.

† Shakspeare.

‡ Job, xix. 26. 27.

† "From seeming evil still educing good."
THOMPSON. HYMN.

"All partial evil, universal good."
POPE.

"Benignant Mercy may ———
"From present ill, eventual good provide."
WALKER.

‡ Scott.

‖ Deut. xxix 29.

very neceſſary to remind any one who poſſeſſes and uſes "the next beſt gift to immortality, reaſon," that we ſhould make a proper uſe of thoſe truths which are not hidden in myſtery, but "*clear* as the ſun" in his noon-tide luſtre, "*fair* as the moon" in her midnight ſerene ſplendour, and to the infidel who wiſhes, yet *dares not* diſbelieve them, "*terrible* as an army with banners!"*

Very ſimilar to theſe inquiries, are the diſquiſitions on thoſe abſtruſe ſubjects, which, as they can never be diſcloſed by rational deductions, do not intereſt us, and cannot be pleaſing to the Divine Being.—The incomprehenſible nature and eſſence of the Trinity—the Holy Incarnation of CHRIST, and His deſcent into Hell,† are points, which, if they were fully known, would perhaps be of no uſe to us. They would neither enable us to reſiſt the poiſoned ſhafts of our grand enemy, nor add to our happineſs here, where it is ordained by a Superior Intelligence, that we ſhall *ſee but in part*. It is our duty, therefore, to leave theſe as we find them, and inquire no further into their myſterious nature. "Enough is known," I repeat it, "to direct us to happineſs." That divine voice which ſaid "touch me not"‡ yet whiſpers in the ear, "attempt not to unravel thoſe myſteries, which are above your comprehenſion; but *go, tell your brethren* thoſe things which your eyes *have ſeen*;—preach righteouſneſs, but not confuſion."

The ſtudy of *metaphyſics* is faſcinating to the mind, but it is alſo deluſive. Purſuing our reſearches into it, we are enveloped in intricacies which we cannot diſentangle but by involving ourſelves deeper, and thus we

"—— find no end, in wand'ring mazes lost."‖

Even the *terms* uſed in this branch of knowledge, are in themſelves indefinite and vague, and therefore the inveſtigations formed from them, muſt be obſcure and incomprehenſible. Contradiction riſes on contradiction, and folly ſucceeds folly.—Thus.—No man can deny that *all things are poſſible*†† with God. The idea of Omnipotence ſuppoſes *infinite* power. Infinite power can act in an unlimited degree—create, preſerve and deſtroy. Yet the Metaphyſicians aſſert that "Omnipotence *cannot* work *contradictions*, it can only effect all poſſible things." They confuſe themſelves again by allowing, "But ſo little are we acquainted with the whole ſyſtem of nature, that we know not what are poſſible and what are not!"* Surely therefore what we may call contradictions, and what would indeed be contradictions in our ſight, and according with our ideas and views, *as men*, may not be contradictions in the ſight of Angels, and of Him with whom *all things are poſſible*.† Can finite nature, therefore, comprehend or preſume to LIMIT infinity? or declare *what things are poſſible, and what are not?* what are contradictory, and what conſiſtent? Can we reconcile Omnipotence with the power of changing immutable laws? or preſcience in the Deity, with free-agency in man? Can we declare that He who made an *immortal* ſoul, cannot in the *twinkling of an eye*, annihilate it forever?‡ No! Our "reaſon reels!"‖ As we know nothing, we cannot *deny* theſe things. Deride not, preſumptuous Reaſoner! for on *rational* grounds I would aſk thee, if thou can declare theſe things to be *impoſſible?* for, by thy own acknowledgment, thou knoweſt not *what are poſſible, and what are not*. Endeavour to diſentangle thyſelf, and thou becomeſt ſtill more bewildered by the denſer fogs which encircle thee! If immutability cannot be changed, and if an immortal being cannot be *deſtroyed* by *infinite* power, is that power INFINITE? And on the contrary, if immutability *can* be rendered mutable, and if an immortal being *can* be annihilated, is it not a ſelf-evident inconſiſtency? If theſe things be paradoxes to human perceptions, remember,—that God who created the rational mind, hath ſet limits to its deductions:—"Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther!"

By theſe imperfect views of the ſubjects of metaphyſical reſearch, may be ſeen their general tendency.

"They lead—to bewilder—and dazzle, to blind!"

Revelation therefore will and muſt ever be ſuperior to Reaſon: for the latter can only be exerciſed when *compariſons* are poſſible. Of the nature and eſſence of beings, infinitely ſuperior to our imperfect ſtate, we know nothing! How then can we *compare* them with things which are known, and thus produce a correct idea, when analogy is loſt, and ſimilitude imperceptible? All is conjecture, and human reaſon vain!

Beware, therefore, my readers, of preſuming to open with unhallowed hands the book of myſtery, ſealed with a ſevenfold ſeal. May you, guided by REVEALED LIGHT, direct the energies of the ſoul to proper objects, and ſtrive to fulfil thoſe great duties of life, which are indicated by Religion, and conſiſtent with right Reaſon; without endeavouring to elucidate thoſe receſſes which will ever remain inſcrutable to the eye of mortality. Be not indifferent to theſe, but rouſe every faculty of the mind to accompliſh them; that you may have the diſcrimination to behold, and reſolution to follow with unwearied perſeverance, thoſe things which belong to your ETERNAL PEACE, before the ſun of mercy ſhall have ſet, to riſe no more, the day of grace, cloſed, a darkneſs of horrors ſhall have encompaſſed you, *and they become forever hid from your eyes!*

ALOR.

For the Evening Fire-ſide.

REFLECTIONS AT NIGHT.

ADDRESSED TO —— ——

How ſweet and how tranquil's the ſtill midnight hour!
When nothing diſturbs ſlumb'ring nature's repoſe,
When the breeze gently whiſpers around the lone bower,
And the wretched, in ſleep find a balm for their woes.

The full moon, refulgent, illumes with her beam
The dark-boſom'd forest, and plays round yon cave;
Where the muſe may indulge Fancy's wildering dream,
Or in ſolitude ponder on death and the grave.

How ſhort and how tranſient 's this ſcene ſo ſublime!
How ſoon will the dawn bid night's ſhadows retire!
Thus on man's life encroaches the ſwift foot of time,
And old age exchanges for youth's wonted fire:

Thus death we regard as a tyrannous foe,
Who envelopes our proſpects in ſhadows and gloom;
But he 'tis who yields us a refuge from woe,
And bids the day dawn on the ſhades of the tomb.

Where then are the terrors to guilt which appear?
Where the ſpectre-like fiend that he ſhrinks from aghaſt?
Eternity beams from its radiant ſpear,
And fruition of pleaſures that ever ſhall laſt.

Then why ſhould we dread on his mandate to wait?
Why fear to partake the immortal repaſt,
Prepared by his will who preſides over fate,
Who deſcends in the moon-beam or rides on the blaſt?

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* Cant. vi. 10.

† The Greek *Hades*—the Hebrew Scheol—the Latin Orcus, Infernus, Mors, &c. generally made use of to represent *the place of departed ſpirits*.

‡ S. John, xx. 17.

‖ Milton.

†† Matt. xix. 26. Mark, x. 27. xiv. 36.

* Jenyns's Inquiry into the nature and origin of evil.

† Luke xviii. 27.

‡ Matt. x. 28.

‖ Young.

Yet still to reflect that a premature grave
May close the bright visions which Fancy has drawn;
That God may demand the short life that he gave,
E'er the fresh dews of evening revisit the lawn;

That to all friendships, pleasures and care-soothing balm,
I must bid an eternal, heart-rending adieu;
My breast must deprive of serenity's calm,
And cloud with despair all life's fast-fading view.

When the current of life shall run languid and slow,
When this heart faintly throbs and death creeps on apace,
When the thought scarcely dwells on lov'd objects below—
Still still shall my heart your remembrance embrace.

While mem'ry possesses her life-cheering power,
Thro' the dim twilight view, your lov'd forms shall appear,
To sooth every pang in the dread parting hour,
And draw from my eyelids affection's last tear.

When the verdure of spring shall encircle the grave,
Where my dust shall repose, there at evening repair,
With the tears of remembrance the cold sod to lave,
And bid the green willow wave mournfully there.

May you, when this form to the dust is consign'd,
Long enjoy all the pleasures that life can bestow;
And, while on the breast of affection reclin'd,
With the sunshine of bliss gild these regions of woe.

For thee, my loved S***, while affection can trace
Past scenes with delight, shall my heart fondly swell;
Thy form from my breast shall despondency chase,
And all the dark vapours of care shall dispel.

When the dread fiat bids my etherial part
Rise, to claim an abode in the regions of love,
The last throb that heaves my cold languid heart,
The ne'er dying fervour of friendship shall prove.
May age, when it steals on the ardour of youth,
With each swift passing year but thy pleasures increase;
May thy heart be, as ever, the mansion of truth,
Spotless honour's abode, and the dwelling of peace.
On you,* who alike as in heart as in name,
May fortune propitious her favours bestow;
May your cheeks never glow with the blushes of shame,
Nor your breasts feel the pang from false friendships that flow!
When the bleak winds of winter howl fearfully round,
May peace and affection your dwelling endear;
And while you with the blessings of plenty abound,
You ne'er will refuse to misfortune a tear.

For P****, while the flame of pure friendship shall glow
In this breast now illum'd with its heart cheering rays,
Recollection shall bid lov'd ideas to flow,
And weave for his forehead the myrtle and bays.

* The two H*****s.

May content e'er attend philosophic research,
And success crown his works in the Chymical mine,
Till some blooming nymph shall convince him at church,
That love is more pleasing as well as divine.
But lo! in the East are the streaks of day gleaming,
From the ocean emerges the life-giving sun!
O'er the landscape his rays all refulgent are streaming,
And the cock loud proclaims that his labour's begun!

Thus, my friends, when your journey of life shall be o'er,
May the splendour of morn night's dark vapours dispel!
May angels conduct you those paths to explore,
Where the spirits, released from mortality, dwell!

LYSANDER.

Selected for the Evening Fire-side.

Case of a person who during twelve years was in a state of complete Inertia.

The following well-authenticated case is of so remarkable, and, I imagine, of so singular a nature, that I even suspect the faculty would find it difficult to give a name to it. History has indeed recorded a curious story concerning the Seven Sleepers, who awoke after having slept during many years, and then returning to their native city, found themselves so many strangers at home. In the case I lay before you, you will see a man who during twelve years, appears not to have existed; and though his eyes were open all that time, he had lost their use, with the rest of his senses, till he as suddenly recovered the use of them.

This singular and terrible disorder, in which the soul suddenly loses the full exercise of its faculties, has I think, been called by physicians by the Greek name *katochos*. In this strange disorder the patient remains in the same position of his members in which he happens to be when all his intellectual and corporeal powers have been suddenly interrupted. He remains with his eyes open, but without seeing; he has neither perception nor hearing during this state; and frequently it is only a few drops of blood which produce these terrible effects, unless they occasion sudden death.

In the Memoirs of Stockholm, of October, 1784, Mr. Arvid Faxe has described the following case; and perhaps, being written in the Swedish language, it may come with some novelty to your readers.

"Oluf Olufson, a peasant, in the parish of Rœnneby, in the province of Bleeting, now aged 44, had been a sailor in his youth, was of a strong constitution, and had once nearly perished in a storm. He was seized with fever in June, 1771, which appeared by pains in his body, great heats, and violent head-ache; he soon lost his speech, and shortly after, his internal and external senses.

"About a month afterwards, the fever and heats abated; but he had become so lean during this malady, that it was difficult to discover in him a fleshy fibre. His body resembled that of a skeleton covered by a slight skin.

"He remained lying on his back constantly, and immoveable; his hands on his breast, his legs stretched out, and his eyes generally closed. He passed *eleven years* in this helpless state, till the summer of 1782. Except a little milk insinuated between his lips, and sometimes a spoonful of wine or brandy, and at the same time, a pinch of snuff, he absolutely took no other food. No one can recollect, during all this time, that he ever expressed a wish for food. He could pass over four days, and sometimes a week, without taking milk. As he had neither flesh nor fat, this constant position did not occasion him any ulcers in his back.

"His brother, Anders Alufson, shewed every fraternal affection for him, and, during these tedious and melancholy years, he sought every means to restore him to life, (for his present state could scarcely be called life,) which the most tender friendship suggested. He boiled some plants, with which he fomented his head frequently. Oluf appeared to recover a certain degree of sensation, regain a little strength, and seemed gradually restored, but he gave no mark of perception nor reasoning. He appeared in a restless state, and full of alarm, in the presence of any person.

"In this state he remained a considerable time before he would suffer himself to be observed stepping out of his bed, which therefore, he generally did in the night, or when the family were gone out in the fields; then would he drag himself to the spot where he could take a little milk; but frequently, by the unexpected entrance of any one, he was seized with great trepidations, and frequently remained stretched out on the ground without the least capability of motion.—At length his brother, resolved to make him quit his usual abode, would take him out, give him other nourishment (though he ever preferred milk,) adding some strengthening substances bathed his head with cold water, by a spring at some distance from the house. Although the patient had recovered his hearing and feeling, he still remained extremely feeble and meagre, without power of articulation, and with scarcely any trace of reason;

habit, however, made him capable of going himself to draw water from the spring to bathe his head.

"Twelve years had passed since the commencement of this malady; and he astonished the village when they saw him suddenly recover the use of his physical faculties. This happened on the 8th of August, 1783, when he returned with water, in the presence of his brother, of his two sisters, and the servants, as they were preparing to dress for church. It was then he was seized with shivering, tremors in his arms and legs, and said, in a hurrying voice, "Lord God! this is amazing!—Where have I been all this time?"

"At this moment a vein in the crown of his head opened of itself, and there fell out about six drops of blood; another vein opened at the extremity of the right nostril; another at the chin; and there ran, as if from both ears, nearly as much blood.

"Nearly about this time he also recovered his speech, spoke what he wished, had his perfect understanding, called by their names all those who were in or out of the house, and whom he had known before his malady, and was astonished to find them grown so old; but he did not recognize one of those whom he had not known before his disorder, although they had appeared daily before him during its prolonged state.

"Oluf considered this accident as a mere dream, without knowing whether it had lasted a long or a short time. But what is more remarkable is, that he did not seem sensibly to have lost his memory during these twelve years, and did not recollect any thing which had passed during his malady.

"The people of the house seating themselves at a table for supper, he desired to read the ordinary prayers and grace, and he performed it without much hesitation. Some days after he desired to perform his devotions, and according to the account of Dr. Henschens, he appeared to have a perfect knowledge of the articles of his faith.

"The opening of the veins mentioned, were followed by slight scars on the crown of his head, as also on the nose, and a red spot on his chin; the wound in the middle remained open a longer time, and the scar gave the nose an obliquity it had not before.

"When the patient had recovered the use of his speech, he spoke for some time with precipitation; but at the present moment in the most orderly manner. His eyes appeared somewhat disfigured; but that arises from his squinting. In all other respects he is in good health, gains corpulency, and performs his daily labors.

"Scarcely had Oluf Olufson recovered his health, than I was informed of his extraordinary malady; but its singularity induced me to take the most minute and well authenticated information ere I laid it before the royal academy. These details, therefore, are equally remarkable and true."

Such is the fact, of which we shall not probably meet with a similar case. However, the natural means by which the sudden cure was accomplished, is not so inconceivable. Hippocrates had foreseen the probability in head pains of an analogous kind, although not followed by that state of stupor or absolute *inertia*.

[*Lon. Mag.*]

If the editors of the Evening Fire-side think this worthy of insertion, it will repay for transcribing, one who is sometimes

A READER.

THE EXCELLENCE OF EARLY PIETY.

Nihil ducit in bonis præter virtutem.

If, from the path of dark disgrace, the youth
Attentive to his friends' and honor's call,
Would prove society's distinguish'd pride,
Let Early Piety become his choice,
And consecrate to God his *vernal* days:
Of moral virtues this the sacred root!
This gives to youth the graces, and adorns
With all that's excellent the human heart.

Early Religion is youth's brightest crown,
Adorn'd with gems Golconda's* sparks outvie,
As does the dazzling sun, the twinkling stars,
Or summer's morn bleak winter's sombre hue!
How cold the heart, of true religion void!
A rock of hard unanimated ice!
In youth it augurs sad inanity,
A *brutish* soul, tho' with a form erect!
Robb'd of those best affections, which belong
To that soft state when active nature rouses,
In youthful hearts, emotions, gen'rous! warm!
Beam'd from the centre of celestial fire!
A youthful heart spontaneous ought to glow
With love of moral beauty's excellence;
And when the swelling soul, admiring, views
Goodness Supreme in all his varied works,
Melt at discovery of such wond'rous love!
For where can youth so fair an object find
As in our mighty, universal Father,
Creation's sole support, (immensely good!)
Author and Source of all felicity
Surrounding worlds enjoy—whose endless praise
Immortal spirits hymn with grateful lyres?

Say, lovely youths who grace your native land,
Your parent's boast, their joy! their darling hope!
Can you, unmov'd with veneration just,
Contemplate on that grandeur! majesty!
Which thro' wide nature all his works display?
Untouch'd by *gratitude*, feel that profusion
Of endless good, of pleasure, and delight,
Pour'd with such kind beneficence and love
At this soft pleasing season of your lives,
Where all is smiling, gay, and sweet around you?
Tho' *blest* with parents, tho' *sustain'd* by friends,
(Who view your actions with a partial eye,
Whose looks give approbation's sweetest balm)
View this event, not as your Merit's due;
Adore the *source* from whence it all proceeds:
Lift to the Great Supreme your grateful eye;
Admire his providence, confess his love,
The kind Director of the human heart;
The soft Infuser of that friendly warmth
That guides your steps, anticipates your wishes,
Supports you onward in the road to fame,
To crown your well-spent youth with wealth and honour.
Religious homage to the God of nature
(Expression natural of a grateful heart)
Becomes our duty, and our source of bliss.
Let then religion be your greatest joy,
The highest summit of supreme delight!
Nor be with you the cold and barren offspring
Of idle speculation (lifeless plan!)
Which starves the soul, brings on that *second* death,
Tremendous punishment of harden'd minds!
Eternity of woe in those dark realms
Where reason triumphs, fallen, base, deprav'd,
To aggravate the torture it procur'd
By trusting to its weak fallacious light.
Be your religion, warm and vigorous;
Born in the heart of an immortal flame;
Then walk the devious path of life secure.
Who bears religion's stamp is free indeed!
'Tis Liberty! (rich gift!) man's highest boast!
Gain'd at a cost surrounding worlds can't pay:
Above all price! yet freely given to man:
Man's glorious portion by supreme decree.

* From Golconda in the East come the best diamonds.

THE KING-FISHER.

From the diminutive size, the slender short legs, and the beautiful colours of this bird, no person would be led to suppose it one of the most rapacious little animals that skims the deep. Yet it is forever on the wing, and feeds on fish, which it takes in surprising quantities, when we consider its size and figure. It chiefly frequents the banks of rivers, and takes its prey after the manner of the osprey, balancing itself at a certain distance above the water for a considerable space, then darting into the deep, and seizing the fish with inevitable certainty. While it remains suspended in the air, in a bright day, the plumage exhibits a beautiful variety of the most dazzling and brilliant colours. It might have been this extraordinary beauty that has given rise to fable; for wherever there is any

thing uncommon, fancy is always willing to increaſe the wonder.

Of this bird it has been ſaid that ſhe built her neſt on the water, and thus in a few days hatched and produced her young. But, to be uninterrupted in this taſk, ſhe was ſaid to be poſſeſſed of a charm to allay the fury of the waves; and during this period the mariner might ſail with the greateſt ſecurity. The ancient poets are full of theſe fables; their hiſtorians are not exempt from them. Cicero has written a long poem in praiſe of the halcyon, of which there remains but two lines. Even the emperor Gordian has written a poem on this ſubject, of which we have nothing remaining. Theſe fables have been adopted even by one of the earlieſt fathers of the church. "Behold," ſays St. Ambroſe, "the little bird which in the midſt of winter lays her eggs on the ſand by the ſhore. From that moment the winds are huſhed; the ſea becomes ſmooth; and the calm continues for fourteen days. This is the time ſhe requires: ſeven days to hatch, and ſeven days to foſter her young. Their Creator has taught theſe little animals to make their neſt in the midſt of the ſtormy ſeaſon, only to manifeſt his kindneſs by granting them a laſting calm. The ſeamen are not ignorant of this bleſſing; they call this interval of fair weather their halcyon days; and they are particularly careful to ſeize the opportunity, as then they need fear no interruption." This, and an hundred other inſtances might be given of the credulity of mankind with reſpect to this bird: they entered into ſpeculations concerning the manner of her calming the deep, the formation of her neſt, and her peculiar ſagacity: at preſent we do not ſpeculate, becauſe we know, with reſpect to our king-fiſher, that moſt of the facts are falſe. It may be alledged indeed, with ſome ſhew of reaſon, that the halcyon of the ancients was a different bird from our king-fiſher; it may be urged, that many birds, eſpecially on the Indian ocean, build a floating neſt upon the ſea; but ſtill the hiſtory of the ancient halcyon is clogged with endleſs fable; and it is but an indifferent method to vindicate falſehood by ſhewing that a part of the ſtory is true.

As the ancients have had their fables concerning this bird, ſo have the modern vulgar. It is an opinion generally received among them, that the fleſh of the king-fiſher will not corrupt, and that it will even baniſh all vermin. This has no better foundation than that which is ſaid of its always pointing, when hung up dead, with its breaſt to the north. The only truth which can be affirmed of this bird when killed, is, that its fleſh is utterly unfit to be eaten; while its beautiful plumage preſerves its luſtre longer than that of any other bird we know.

[*Goldſmith.*]

To the Editor of the Philadelphia Medical Museum.

DEAR SIR,

According to my promiſe, I ſend you a receipt for making an indelible ink, ſuperior to that imported from London, conſiderable quantities of which, have lately been ſold in Philadelphia.

I am, Sir, with reſpect,
Your humble ſervant,
JAMES WOODHOUSE.

Diſſolve four drachms of the nitrate of ſilver or lunar cauſtic of the ſhops, in four ounce meaſures of rain or river water, and when the ſolution is clear, add to it ſixty drops of an infuſion of galls, made by pouring a gill of boiling water, on two drachms of powdered galls.

Diſſolve one ounce of pearl-aſh, in four ounce meaſures of water, and let it ſtand until the ſolution becomes clear.

Dip a flat ſtick in the ſolution of pearl-aſh, and impregnate the article in the part to be marked with it, and let it be well dried. Then write over it, with a clean pen, having a ſtiff nib, dipped in the ſolution of lunar cauſtic, holding the gallate of ſilver ſuſpended, and the letters will be formed of a black colour.

When an infuſion of galls is added to a ſolution of the nitrate of ſilver, the gallic acid unites to a portion of the oxide of ſilver of the nitric ſolution, and forms gallate of ſilver, which remains for a ſhort time ſuſpended in the ſolution, and makes the ink, which conſiſts of gallate and nitrate of ſilver, flow from the pen in an equable manner.

When the ink comes in contact with muſlin, linen or cotton, impregnated with the ſolution of pearl-aſh, a double elective attraction takes place. The gallic and nitric acids, unite with the pearl-aſh and form gallate and nitrate of pearl-aſh; the carbonic acid of the pearl-aſh joins the oxide of ſilver, and makes carbonate of ſilver, which is depoſited upon the part written.

When articles, marked with this indelible ink, are waſhed, the gallate and nitrate of pot-aſh, being ſoluble in water, are carried away, and the carbonate of ſilver remains behind.

When the gallate of ſilver has fallen to the bottom of the nitric ſolution, the veſſel containing it, muſt be frequently ſhaken, to keep it ſuſpended.

The quantity of ink, mentioned in this receipt, will fill forty bottles, of the ſize imported into this country.

The pot-aſh contained in the vials brought from London, is coloured with cochineal or red ſaunders.

Sea Coaſt of Great Britain.

Thoſe who have never obſerved our boldeſt coaſts, have no idea of their tremendous ſublimity. The boaſted works of arts, the higheſt towers, and the nobleſt domes, are but ant-hills when put in compariſon: the ſingle cavity of a rock often exhibits a coping higher than the ceiling of a gothic cathedral. The face of the ſhore offers to the view a wall of maſſive ſtone ten times higher than our talleſt ſteeples. What ſhould we think of a precipice three quarters of a mile in height; and yet the rocks of St. Kilda are ſtill higher! What muſt be our awe to approach the edge of that impending height, and to look down on the unfathomable vacuity below; to ponder on the terrors of falling to the bottom, where the waves that ſwell like mountains, are ſcarcely ſeen to curl on the ſurface, and the roar of an ocean a thouſand leagues broad appears ſofter than the murmur of a brook! It is in theſe formidable manſions that myriads of ſea-fowls are for ever ſeen ſporting, flying in ſecurity down the depth, half a mile beneath the feet of the ſpectator.—The crow and the chough avoid thoſe frightful precipices; they chooſe ſmaller heights, where they are leſs expoſed to the tempeſt; it is the cormorant, the gannet, the tarrock, and the terne, that venture to theſe dreadful retreats, and claim an undiſturbed poſſeſſion. To the ſpectator from above thoſe birds, though ſome of them are above the ſize of an eagle, ſeem ſcarce as large as a ſwallow; and their loudeſt ſcreaming is ſcarce perceptible.

But the generality of our ſhores are not ſo formidable. Though they may riſe two hundred fathom above the ſurface, yet it often happens that the water forſakes the ſhore at the departure of the tide, and leaves a noble and delightful walk for curioſity on the beach. Not to mention the variety of ſhells with which the ſand is ſtrewed, the lofty rocks that hang over the ſpectator's head, and that ſeem but juſt kept

from falling, produce in him no unpleaſing gloom. If to this be added the fluttering, the ſcreaming, and the purſuits of myriads of water-birds, all either intent on the duties of incubation, or rouſed at the preſence of a ſtranger, nothing can compoſe a ſcene of more peculiar ſolemnity. To walk along the ſhore when the tide is departed, or to ſit in the hollow of a rock when it is come in, attentive to the various ſounds that gather on every ſide, above and below, may raiſe the mind to its higheſt and nobleſt exertions. The ſolemn roar of the waves, ſwelling into, and ſubſiding from the vaſt caverns beneath, the piercing note of the gull, the frequent chatter of the guillemot, the loud note of the auk, the ſcream of the heron, and the hoarſe, deep, periodical croaking of the cormorant, all unite to furniſh out the grandeur of the ſcene, and turn the mind to HIM who is the eſſence of all ſublimity.

[*Goldſmith.*]

CURE FOR THE DROPSY.

About four years ſince, I providentially obtained of a French phyſician of eminence, a receipt to cure the dropſy. I made it known to ſome of my acquaintance, who were afflicted with this malady; they made trial of the remedy, and with ſucceſs; indeed, I have never known it to fail of effecting a cure, when the medicine has been properly made, duly taken, and perſevered in. I could furniſh many inſtances of its great and happy effects, but I will mention one example only. A lady about ſeventy years old, had the dropſy to that degree, that ſhe was fearful to ſtand on her feet, leſt her ſkin ſhould burſt. I ſaw her in that ſituation, and it was apprehended ſhe would die in a ſhort time. She, however, had heard that I had a receipt to cure the dropſy, and was anxious to experience it. She took the medicine, according to the preſcription; in leſs than a week, by evacuation, the ſwelling of her body entirely abated, and, in a few weeks thereafter, ſhe was reſtored to perfect health.

The receipt ſoon became in great demand I furniſhed copies of it to divers perſons—and that it might be more generally known, I publiſhed it in the Centinel of Freedom. Since which, I have, to the preſent period, been repeatedly called on by perſons, not only in this ſtate, but in the ſtate of New-York, for this recipt, and have this moment finiſhed copying it for a friend at a diſtance. To ſave myſelf the trouble, if poſſible, of tranſcribing the recipt, as heretofore, and that ſtill greater publicity may be given to it, I requeſt that you will again inſert it in your paper; and ſhould the printers of newſpapers, in the United States, republiſh the recipt, they, probably, would render eſſential benefits to many of their fellow citizens.

FRIEND OF MAN.

Newark, Nov. 3, 1806.

THE RECIPT.

Put into a ſtone or earthen jug, a gallon of ſtale ſound cyder, together with a double handful of parſley roots and tops cut fine; an handful of ſcraped horſe-radiſh; two table-ſpoonfuls of bruiſed muſtard-ſeed; half an ounce of oxymell of ſquills, and one ounce juniper berries. The liquor to be kept warm by the fire twenty-four hours; to be often agitated, and then ſtrained for uſe. Doſe, for an adult, half a wine glaſs full, three times a day, on an empty ſtomach. The doſe may be increaſed if neceſſary.

After the water ſhall be diſcharged, the patient ſhould uſe moderate exerciſe; ſubſiſt on dry nouriſhing diet, and abſtain from all liquids as much as poſſible.

[*Newark Centinel.*]

Vaccination earneſtly recommended.

A letter from Copenhagen, dated April 27th ſays, the King has received with great ſatisfaction the laſt report of the commiſſion for the Vaccine inoculation and at the ſame time reſolved that their labours ſhould be continued. He has given orders alſo that the Clergy at Baptiſms and on other proper occaſions ſhould recommend to parents to have their children inoculated, and that all medical men when they eſtabliſh themſelves in buſineſs, ſhall enter into an engagement to promote vaccination as much as poſſible. According to a general eſtimate made in the report, 480 pieces of glaſs with Vaccine matter, have in the courſe of laſt year been diſtributed, namely, 230 to different places in Denmark; 117 to Norway 39 to the Duchies, 30 to Iceland, 30 to Greenland, 4 to China; 8 to the Eaſt Indies and the reſt to Sweden In Copenhagen during the laſt year, 1007 perſons were inoculated, and in the whole kingdom 7,985, making altogether a total of 28,966 inoculated in the three laſt years ſince the introduction of the practice.—An example worthy of imitation in the United States.

BENEVOLUS.

The Robenier, a tree generally known by the name of the falſe Alcacia, is now extenſively cultivating in France. It had heretofore been reared only for its fragrant flowers; but Citizen Francais de Neufchateau having aſcertained that this tree will, in ten or twelve years, attain the ſize of an oak thirty or forty years ſtanding, has induced numerous plantations. Citizen Neufchateau planted a tract of about two acres of very poor ſoil, with the Robiniers, about ſix feet from each other, and valued at not more than ſix francs; in ten years the timber was felled, and ſold for 36,000 francs; and in the ten ſucceeding years, he had three toppings or cuttings of very conſiderable value. Theſe trees, planted in hedges, and cropped every third year, form an impenetrable fence, rendering at the ſame time much uſeful wood. The ſlighteſt and moſt hungry ſoils will anſwer for them.

A Liquor thus compounded, will deſtroy caterpillars, ants, and other inſects—namely, ſoap, flour of ſulphur, and champignons, equal quantities, diſſolved by a gentle heat in twenty times their weight of water. Inſects ſprinkled by this liquor, die immediately.

Flax expoſed to ſnow, derives from it the ſame degree of preparation for dreſſing as reſults from ſteeping; this diſcovery, which aroſe from accident, may prove ſerviceable to the cultivators of this plant.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DAMIS came to hand too late for inſertion this week. It is deſigned for the next.

The *Hiſtorical Anecdote* we have ſeen ſtated in a different, and, in our opinion, more correct manner.

TYRO's Propoſition is ingenious, but not new: And not uſeful, becauſe it implies an impoſſibility.

The PEDLAR's Pack, FRAMPTON. TYCHO, and ſeveral ſelections will be diſpoſed of next week.

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